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# Honorary Degree Award Citation for Robert Levy

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## **Honorary Degree Awarded to Retiring Faculty**

### **Robert Brooks Levy, Professor of Music**

"Robert Levy, as conductor, trumpeter, teacher, and composer, you have directed Lawrence's wind ensembles and taught its trumpet students for the last 25 years. At the time of your promotion to the rank of Professor, one reviewer commented, 'I can think of few college professors anywhere who [can match] the level of ensemble conducting, awareness of literature, a successful studio, compositional output, practical experience in orchestral, chamber music and jazz performance as well as maintaining an active performance career' as have you.

Your inimitable conducting style--bouncy and exuberant--has graced the Chapel stage almost 150 times in your Lawrence career, including several of those unforgettable "Bandorama" events that have packed the hall and delighted the audience. Those performances, I am pleased to report, did not include any works by Karel Husa. In addition to your conducting, you have also been an active performer, on campus and off, and have prepared generations of trumpet majors for their student recitals. When you are not conducting or performing on campus, you can be found leading the Big Band Reunion at Frank's Pizza Place or recording a variety of CDs, such as the cryptically titled 'Did you ever cross over to Sneden's?'

Long an advocate of contemporary music, you have become a leading expert on Alec Wilder and his compositions, work that has led to interviews with American legends like Tony Bennett and Studs Terkel, a project that you will continue to pursue in your retirement. We look forward to the production of your documentary film and the publication of your book on the life of this major American composer. We are pleased as well that the occasion of your retirement has prompted you to attend your first commencement in decades, but have to wonder if this means that the Red Lodge Music Festival in Montana has been canceled for this year.

As I had the privilege of playing a role in bringing you to Lawrence, I am pleased to play a role as you depart. Which is another way of saying that I brought you into the LUtrix, and I can take you out.

By the authority vested in me, I now confer upon you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, and admit you to its right, its privileges, and its obligations."

*Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 2004*